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EXPLORING CONSUMER'S PURCHASE INTENTION ON CHINESE ELECTRIC VEHICLE IN THAILAND

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KeyWords
Purchase Intention, Electric Vehicle, UTAUT model, China, Thai Consumer

ABSTRACT

This study explores Thai consumers' purchase intentions on Chinese electric vehicles (EVs), using the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) as a theoretical foundation including performance expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, price value, and additional variables like brand trust. As the EV market rapidly expands globally, Thailand has emerged as a promising destination for Chinese EV manufacturers. This research aims to analyze key factors influencing consumer behavior in this market, by conducting an empirical survey and analyzing data using WarpPLS 8.0, the study offers insights into the relative impact of each factor on purchase intention. A survey of 341 respondents revealed that brand enjoyment and credibility significantly influence Thai consumers' purchase intentions for Chinese electric cars. This research not only supports marketing and policy formulation but also enriches the academic discourse on EV adoption in emerging economies.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.2 Research Background

The worsening climate change crisis has intensified, with the transportation sector identified as one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions (IPCC, 2022). However, Electric Vehicles (EV) have emerged as a viable and trendy alternative because of their technological advancements and low carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions (Mazzocco, 2023).

Since 2019, China, Europe, and the United States have become the global EV market (IEA, 2023). However, the global rise and overseas expansion of China's electric vehicle industry represent one of the most significant industrial and geopolitical transformations of the early 21st century (Feng & Chen, 2024). Initially driven by strong government support and strategic industrial policies in the early 2010s, China's EV sector has gradually evolved into a globally competitive industry (Chu, 2021). This transformation has reshaped the international automotive landscape and generated far-reaching implications for global trade patterns, technological leadership, energy security, and economic competition. Between 2014 and 2025, Chinese firms invested approximately USD 143 billion in overseas EV and battery projects (Bhattacharya, 2025). Notably, in 2024, Chinese companies, for the first time, invested more in developing EV supply chains abroad than within China, highlighting the growing internationalization of the industry (CBO, 2022).

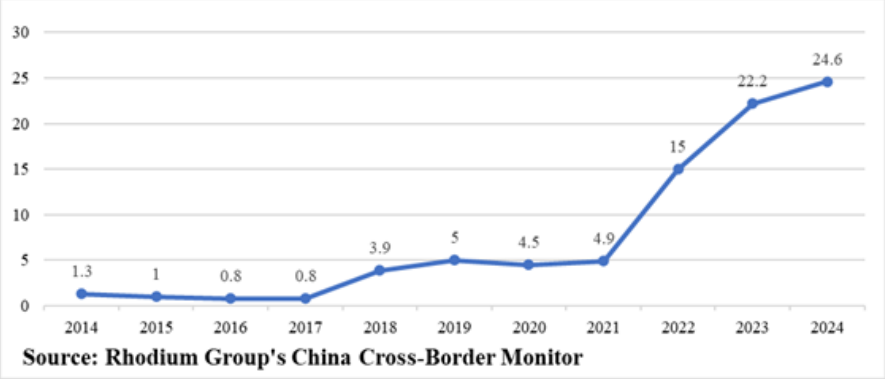

Figure 1 Share of EV-related investments in China's total FDI spending

The successful Chinese Electric Vehicle Brands in Global Marketing such as, BYD or Build Your Dreams stands as the most successful brand in global market expansion. The company overtook Tesla in global BEV sales in 2024 Rest of World, with 4.27 million new energy vehicles delivered in 2024, capturing 34.1% market share in China (Phoon, 2025). BYD's success stems from its vertical integration spanning from battery production to vehicle assembly, including the development of Blade Battery technology, offering enhanced safety and the God's Eye autonomous driving system (Gerbaudo, 2024). The company sells in over 80 countries worldwide, with aggressive expansion plans targeting doubled international sales. MG Motor is leveraging Western brand heritage combined with Chinese technology. The European market emerged as a key growth area for MG, with more than 240,000 units sold in 2024, reflecting a robust 5% increase in the Rest of World. Particularly, the performance in Australia, where the brand went from selling just 600 cars in 2017 to 58,346 units in 2023, becoming the seventh best-selling brand in Australia (Fallah, 2023). Geely Group, represents one of the most successful Chinese automotive conglomerates in global expansion, leveraging a portfolio of brands including Geely Auto, Lynk & Co, Zeekr, Volvo, and Polestar. In 2024, sales across its automotive brands grew 22% year-on-year to 3,336,534 units, setting a new record for the Group Rest of World (Zhejiang Geely, 2025). Meanwhile, NIO positions itself in the premium and luxury vehicle segment, competing with BMW, Mercedes-Benz, and Tesla in the premium category (Schaal, 2024). The brand's distinctive feature is battery swapping technology, enabling battery replacement within 5 minutes, solving the lengthy charging time problem (CNBC, 2024). In 2025, the smart electric vehicle manufacturer achieved a new monthly peak, delivering 34,749 vehicles, representing a robust 64.1% increase year-over-year (NIO Inc., 2025). In summary, BYD and MG are clear leaders in global marketing success, with BYD focusing on sales volume across all market segments while MG succeeds by leveraging British brand heritage in developed markets. These brands not only demonstrate the competitive capabilities of China's electric vehicle industry but also serve as key drivers in the fundamental restructuring of the global automotive industry in century.

In the meantime, the demand for electric vehicles is on the rise globally, particularly in Southeast Asia, with battery electric vehicle (BEV) sales in Southeast Asia increasing by 894% in Q2 2023, driven by demand from Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia (Counterpoint Research, 2023). When considering the demand for vehicles in these countries, it was found that the demand for internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles tends to decrease significantly, and the demand for hybrid electric vehicles tends to be the highest, especially for Thailand, which has the highest interest in battery electric vehicles, as shown in the figure 2. In the past, internal combustion vehicles in Thailand accounted for more than 80 percent of all domestic vehicles sold. However, the current trend in car usage has changed, with electric vehicle sales increasing significantly, increasing from 20.52 percent in 2022 to 41.39 percent in 2023, while internal combustion vehicles accounted for a decreasing proportion of sales. These statistics show the country's interest in electric vehicles.

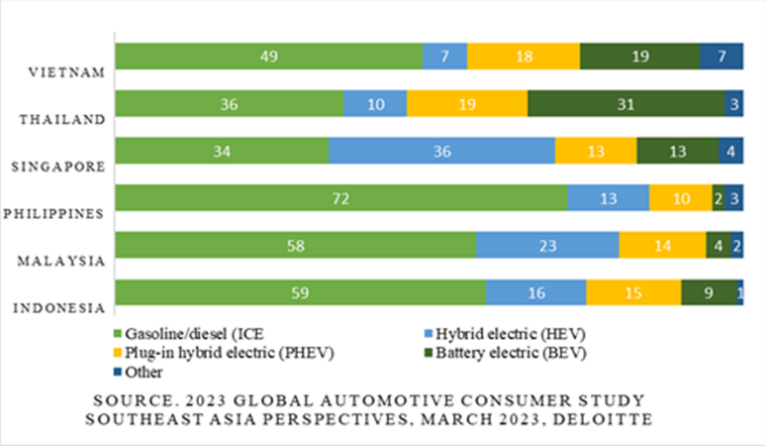

Figure 2 Proportion of different types of vehicle usage in Southeast Asia

As a developing nation, Thailand presents significant opportunities for the adoption and growth of the EV market. Thailand is moving toward becoming a major global production base for electric vehicles and related components. The National Electric Vehicle Policy Committee has introduced various measures to promote electric vehicles, such as the 30@30 policy, which sets a target for the production of zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) to account for at least 30% of total vehicle production by 2030 (Laoonual & Nantasaksiri, 2023). Additionally, the Thai Cabinet has approved the 3.5 Measures, which measures provide tax incentives, subsidies for EV manufacturers, and the development of charging infrastructure. EV passenger cars with a suggested retail price not exceeding THB 7 million per unit will benefit from a reduced excise tax, lowered from 8% and 10% to just 2% between 2024 and 2027. Similarly, excise tax for EV pickup trucks, following the same criteria, will be reduced from 10% to 0% in 2024–2025 and to 2% in 2026–2027. For EV motorcycles, the excise tax will decrease from 5% and 10% to 1% from 2024 to 2027, as outlined in the Ministerial Regulation Prescribing the Excise Tariff Rate (EY, 2024). These policies not only support Thailand's greenhouse gas reduction goals but also attract new investors, encourage the establishment of EV production bases, and drive existing entrepreneurs to transition to the EV industry.

For the electric vehicle market in Thailand, China and the United States are the major manufacturers with the most registrations (Choksawatpaisan, 2024), followed by Sweden and Germany (Fadhil & Shen, 2024). The overall growth in EV registrations reflect the increasing adoption of EVs in Thailand, while the divergent trends across brands highlight the competitive dynamics and changing consumer demands in the market, particularly with the entry of more Chinese brands each year, reinforcing the interest among Thai consumers in Chinese electric vehicles. According to the table 1, the electric vehicle market in Thailand is experiencing a significant transformation during 2023-2024, particularly marked by the increasingly evident dominance of Chinese brands. The data reveals that 7 out of the top 10 brands are Chinese, namely, BYD, MG, Neta, ChangAn, Aion, GWM, and Wuling, collectively commanding over 83% of the market share.

Rank	EV		Total sales volume		Diff	%	Market Share %
	Brand	Nationality	2023	2024			
1	BYD	China	30651	27005	-3646	-11.9	38.5
2	MG	China	12764	9081	-3683	-28.9	12.9
3	Neta	China	12777	7969	-4808	-37.6	11.4
4	ChangAn	China	2	5912	5910	N/A	8.4
5	Aion	China	89	5185	5096	N/A	7.4
6	Tesla	USA	8206	4121	-4085	-49.8	5.9
7	GWM	China	6746	3231	-3515	-52.1	4.6
8	Volvo	Sweden	1828	2563	735	40.2	3.7
9	BMW	Germany	1403	1483	80	5.7	2.1
10	Wuling	China	491	711	220	44.8	1

SOURCE. Autolifethailand.tv

Table 1 Total Sales of electric vehicles in Thailand, 2023-2024.

BYD, the leading Chinese brand, maintains its market leadership with a substantial market share of 38.5%, despite sales de-

clining by 11.9% from 30,651 units in 2023 to 27,005 units in 2024. It is followed by MG and Neta, both Chinese brands as well, though both experienced severe contractions with declines of 28.9% and 37.6%, respectively. Notably, ChangAn captured an 8.4% market share, while Aion secured 7.4% of the market. This demonstrates the potential of new-generation Chinese automakers rapidly expand their customer base. Conversely, foreign brands are facing significant challenges. Tesla from the United States, once a market leader in electric vehicles, has dropped to 6th place with sales declining by 49.8% to only 4,121 units and holding just 5.9% market share. BMW from Germany achieved only modest growth with a mere 2.1% market share. However, Volvo from Sweden stands out as the only foreign brand achieving remarkable success, growing 40.2% and capturing 3.7% of the market share. This demonstrates that premium brands with clear positioning can still thrive in a highly competitive market.

Despite the continuous growth of Chinese electric vehicles in the Thai market, consumer decision-making in this emerging product category remains increasingly complex. To examine the factors influencing purchase intention, this study applies the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2), focusing specifically on performance expectancy, social influence, hedonic motivation, and price value. However, electric vehicles remain a relatively new product category for many consumers. This limitation is particularly relevant in the Thai market, where Chinese automotive brands are still in the process of establishing credibility and consumer confidence. Brand trust, defined as the consumer's confidence in a brand's ability to deliver on its promises (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), serves as a critical complementary construct that captures the emotional and relational dimensions of consumer behavior. Therefore, this study integrates UTAUT2 with brand trust to provide a more holistic understanding of the factors driving Thai consumers' intention to purchase Chinese electric vehicles.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although electric vehicle registrations in Thailand have seen rapid growth, particularly with Chinese brands dominating the market with a combined share of over 83% during 2023-2024, consumer purchasing decisions for this new product segment remain highly complex. A key concern is that Thai consumers continue to question the long-term reliability of Chinese brands compared to long-established Japanese or European brands.

The main challenge facing Chinese EV brands is building 'brand trust' in terms of vehicle quality, safety, and after-sales service. Furthermore, factors within the UTAUT2 framework, such as performance expectations or hedonic motivation, may influence consumer groups differently across age ranges. Therefore, this research aims to investigate which factors are the true main drivers and the significant role brand trust plays in converting interest into actual purchase intention among Thai consumers. The following research questions are formulated to address these gaps:

Question 1: Which factors significantly influence Thai consumers' purchase intention towards Chinese electric vehicles?

Question 2: How do the core constructs of UTAUT2 influence purchase intention?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the problem statement mentioned above, this study aims to explore consumers' purchase intention on Chinese electric vehicle in Thailand. The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

Objective 1: To examine the current state of the Thai electric vehicle market, with a specific focus on Chinese EV brands.

Objective 2: Exploring consumer's purchase intention on Chinese electric vehicle in Thailand.

Objective 3: Exploring the key factors of consumer's purchase intention on Chinese electric vehicle in Thailand.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETIVAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Lirweature Review

2.1.1 Chinese Electric Vehicle in Thaialnd

Chinese EV brands have prioritized addressing consumer concerns about performance, particularly in Thailand's developing EV infrastructure. For instance, BYD has introduced models like the BYD Atto 3, which offers a competitive driving range of approximately 400-480 km per charge, alleviating range anxiety for Thai consumers. These vehicles are equipped with advanced battery technologies, such as BYD's Blade Battery, which enhances safety and durability, addressing concerns about battery life and reliability. (Tsai et al., 2024) Additionally, Chinese brands are collaborating with local partners to expand charging infrastructure. For example, GWM has partnered with Thailand's Electricity Generating Authority to install fast-charging stations across major cities, improving station reliability and reducing charging time (Paudel et al., 2023). Consumers perceive these advancements as evidence that Chinese EVs can meet their expectations for long-distance travel and energy efficiency (Secinaro et al., 2022).

The increasing presence of Chinese EVs in Thailand is bolstered by social influence, driven by government policies and growing visibility, which aim to transform Thailand into a major production hub of zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs), or vehicles that emit zero pollution, with at least 30% of all vehicle production in 2030. The Thai government's EV 3.5 policies and 30@30, measures show that the government's perceived commitment, along with financial incentives such as tax benefits and subsidies, plays a significant role in shaping consumer decisions. Consumers are more likely to consider electric vehicles if they trust the government's long-term dedication to supporting the EV market and if they are offered financial incentives (Chonsalasin et al., 2024). The visibility of Chinese

EVs on Thai roads, coupled with aggressive marketing campaigns and media coverage, has normalized their adoption. For instance, promotional events and test-drive campaigns by NIO and GWM have increased consumer familiarity, echoing opinions, experiences, and conversations with friends, family, and people influence consumers' decisions to adopt electric cars (Chonsalasin et al., 2024). Additionally, endorsements from Thai celebrities and influencers on social media platforms further amplify positive perceptions, encouraging consumers to consider Chinese EVs, since people aged 21–35 years are influenced by social influence and personal norms (Limpasirisuwan et al., 2024). Chinese EV brands emphasize hedonic motivation by offering innovative and enjoyable driving experiences. Models like the NIO ES8 and BYD Dolphin feature advanced infotainment systems, sleek designs, and smooth acceleration, which appeal to Thai consumers seeking a futuristic and pleasurable driving experience (Manutworakit & Choocharukul, 2022). Moreover, BYD's integration of smart technologies, such as voice-activated controls and over-the-air software updates, enhances the perception of EVs as exciting and cutting-edge. These features resonate with younger demographics, particularly Millennials and Gen Z, who value the pride and satisfaction of adopting sustainable technologies (Polisetty et al., 2024). In Thailand, test-drive events organized by Chinese brands often highlight the quiet operation and instant torque of EVs, fostering a sense of joy and innovation that drives purchase intention (Gunawan et al., 2022). Moreover, Brands like BYD and GWM offer vehicles at lower price points compared to Western competitors, making EVs more accessible to middle-income consumers. For instance, the BYD Dolphin is priced at approximately THB 700,000, significantly lower than comparable models from European or American brands (Techa-Erawan et al., 2024). Additionally, government subsidies and tax exemptions under Thailand's EV policies reduce the upfront cost of Chinese EVs, enhancing their perceived price value (Suttakul et al., 2022). Chinese manufacturers also address long-term cost concerns by offering extended warranties on batteries and lower maintenance costs on the cost-effectiveness of EVs (Chinda, 2022). These factors make Chinese EVs an attractive option for price-sensitive Thai consumers.

Furthermore, building brand trust is critical for Chinese EV manufacturers, as Thai consumers may initially perceive foreign brands as riskier compared to established Japanese or Western brands (Zhu et al., 2023). To counter this, Chinese companies like BYD and GWM have invested in local partnerships, transparent communication, and robust after-sales services. For example, BYD's collaboration with Thai dealerships and its commitment to local production have enhanced its reputation as a reliable brand. Additionally, positive user reviews and media coverage of Chinese EVs' performance and affordability are fostering trust (Zang et al., 2022). By consistently delivering quality vehicles and addressing consumer concerns about battery reliability and service availability, Chinese brands are gradually overcoming skepticism and building a loyal customer base in Thailand. Since engaging with customers creates an emotional connection, they start to view the brand in a positive light and have positive thoughts about it. Customers perceive less risk and receive less information when purchasing from trusted brands (Tripopsakul & Puriwat, 2022).

2.1.2 UTATU2 Model

Purchase Intention refers to a consumer's plan or willingness to buy a product in the future. Consumers' purchase intention is an important indicator for predicting purchase behavior. The stronger consumers' purchase intention is, the more likely they are to purchase. In the case of EVs, this study, utilizes the UTAUT2 framework developed by Venkatesh (Venkatesh et al., 2012) to study the factors affecting consumers' technology usage behavior. The key constructs follow as,

Performance Expectancy: In Thailand EV charging infrastructure is expanding slowly due to high investment costs and uncertain returns, leading to consumer concerns about station reliability and range anxiety. High charging fees also reduce the perceived cost advantage of EVs over traditional vehicles. While government price controls may improve affordability and predictability, ongoing market uncertainty makes consumers view EV adoption as a gradual transition (Thananusak et al., 2021). Driving range, safety features, and charging infrastructure significantly shape consumer expectations. Users generally perceive EVs as fuel-efficient, environmentally friendly, and technologically advanced. However, concerns about battery life and charging time still influence adoption decisions (Phuthong et al., 2024). According to EV Mapping the Field and Providing a Research Agenda, consumers believe electric vehicles can meet their needs compared to conventional vehicles. As consumers assess whether EVs can support long-distance travel without frequent charging, and the availability of charging infrastructure. EVs are also recognized for their energy efficiency and lower environmental impact. Furthermore, advancements in battery life, charging speed, and overall vehicle performance continue to enhance consumer confidence in EV technology (Secinaro et al., 2022). In Turkey, consumers who believe that EVs offer personal benefits such as they do less harm to the environment, their engines are less noisy, they provide instant acceleration and a smooth driving experience, they run on less costly fuel, purchasing an EVs improves one's status, etc. are more likely to intend to purchase an EV (Yeğin & Ikram, 2022).

Social Influence: Consumers are influenced by recommendations from family, friends, and their broader social circles. Additionally, government policies promoting EVs, media coverage, and marketing efforts contribute to shaping public perception. People are more likely to adopt EVs when they see them gaining popularity and acceptance within their communities (Phuthong et al., 2024). The Thai government's push to position Thailand as ASEAN's EV hub fosters a collective shift toward EV adoption. Increased visibility of EVs on the roads and policy-driven awareness campaigns contribute to norm-setting, encouraging consumers to consider EVs (Wattana & Wattana, 2022). In Beijing, 64% of EV owners were influenced by positive feedback from users, with media, personal experience, and manufacturer websites, shaping perceptions. Government policies, such as traffic exemptions for BEVs, and

heightened concern over air pollution further reinforced interest. After red alerts on air quality, 43% of conventional car buyers reconsidered switching to an EV, highlighting the role of social influence and environmental awareness in adoption (Y. Yang & Tan, 2019). In Taiwan, mass media, expert reviews, and public information are more effective at shaping consumers' intentions than pressure from friends or family. Also, consumers' subjective norm regarding electric vehicles has a significantly positive impact on their purchase intention (Tu & Yang, 2019).

Hedonic Motivation: Consumers who perceive electric vehicles as exciting and pleasurable to drive are more inclined to consider purchasing one. This perception is often driven by features such as smooth acceleration, quiet operation, and advanced technological interfaces, which together create a futuristic and enjoyable driving experience compared to conventional internal combustion engine vehicles. Accordingly, marketing strategies should highlight the thrill and satisfaction of driving an EV in order to attract potential buyers effectively (Manutworakit & Choocharukul, 2022). Some consumers adopt EVs not just for environmental or cost-saving reasons, but because they find joy in new technology. The excitement of driving an EV, experiencing smooth acceleration, and enjoying the quietness of the vehicle can all contribute to pleasure-driven adoption. Some consumers feel a sense of pride in adopting an environmentally friendly vehicle, reinforcing their personal values and identity (Rezvani et al., 2015). For Millennials and Gen Z consumers, they feel good, happy, proud, or satisfied when buying sustainable products such as organic food, eco-friendly packaging, or electric vehicles (Polisetty et al., 2024). In Indonesia, the more happiness and pleasure consumers perceive from using electric vehicles, the more positively they evaluate them, fostering a favorable attitude and future use (Gunawan et al., 2022). In Shenzhen and Guangzhou, hedonic motivation significantly influences taxi drivers' intention to drive electric taxis. As China rapidly grows, electric taxi drivers are viewed as innovative and adventurous. This intrinsic motivation shapes their self-perception and fosters a positive intention to adopt electric taxis (Zhou et al., 2021). Also, In Guangdong, Shanghai, and Shandong, China, consumers are willing to pay more to access more technologically advanced vehicles in order to obtain more enjoyment. They care more about the experience and enjoyment of EVs than practical functionality or economic concerns (Fu, 2024).

Price Value: price is a significant barrier to EV adoption in Thailand. Consumers weigh the initial purchase price, fuel costs, maintenance expenses, and available financial incentives when deciding whether to buy an EV. The study indicates that higher EV prices negatively affect purchasing decisions, while financial incentives, tax reductions, and government subsidies can make EVs more appealing (Techa-Erawan et al., 2024). Thai consumers are still concerned about battery replacement and maintenance, which also affects perceived long-term value. However, lower fuel and maintenance costs can offset initial expenses, making EVs more appealing over time (Kongklaew et al., 2021). From an economic standpoint, electric vehicles are considered cost-effective over time due to their lower fuel consumption and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The introduction of electricity subsidies and government-controlled pricing mechanisms may further enhance the perceived price value of EVs, thereby encouraging broader consumer adoption (Chinda, 2022). In California, as middle-income renters and mid/high-income young families begin adopting EVs in greater numbers, financial incentives, subsidies, and cost reductions will play a crucial role (Lee et al., 2019). Plus, generation Y consumers in Malaysia perceive EVs as economical and efficient in the long term due to their lower running costs compared to traditional combustion vehicles (Vafaei-Zadeh et al., 2022). In Hong Kong, the price value positively affects the rental intention of consumers because of their willingness to pay a premium for EVs. The likelihood of consumer spending on an EV increase with youth, education, and a green lifestyle (Gulzari et al., 2022).

2.1.3 Brand Trust

Chinese electric vehicle manufacturers face unique challenges in building brand trust, particularly in international markets where Chinese automotive brands historically lacked presence. In China, consumers are more willing to believe that famous brands will provide better quality assurance and high-quality service, which indicates that brand trust, a perceived endorsement dimension, improves users' perception of benefits of electric vehicles (Zang et al., 2022). However, building trust for Chinese brands in Thailand requires overcoming preconceptions about Chinese product quality, customer engagement creates emotional connections, leading to positive brand perceptions and reduced perceived risk (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2022). For Chinese manufacturers like BYD and GWM, investments in local partnerships, transparent communication, robust after-sales services, and local production facilities have been strategic approaches to building trust in the Thai market. It has a significantly positive correlation with perceived benefit. Consumers who trust a brand are more likely to perceive EVs as beneficial, which enhances their attitude and purchase intention. EV manufacturers must focus on building trust through consistent quality, transparent communication, and strong customer support (C. Yang et al., 2020). Further research indicates that Generation Z consumers are more risk-averse than previous generations (Dobrowolski et al., 2022). This trend is particularly evident among young Thai consumers, who, while open to innovation and familiar with Chinese technology products in various categories such as smartphones and electronic devices, remain highly cautious when evaluating high-value products with significant safety concerns, such as electric vehicles (Theocharis et al., 2025).

2.1.4 Research Gap

Although the body of literature on electric vehicle (EV) adoption has grown substantially over the past decade, several critical gaps remain that this study seeks to address. First, the majority of prior studies applying the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) framework to EV adoption have been conducted in the context of the total market (Tu & Yang, 2019), with comparatively limited attention given to Southeast Asian developing economies such as Thailand. While a handful of

studies have examined EV adoption in Thailand (Thananusak et al., 2021; Chonsalasin et al., 2024), these studies have not specifically focused on Chinese electric vehicle brands, which now dominate the Thai market with over 83% of market share. This represents a significant contextual gap, as the consumer dynamics, cultural values, and policy environment in Thailand differ considerably from those of the markets studied in existing literature.

Moreover, while prior research has examined the role of brand trust in general consumer behavior and in the adoption of established Western or Japanese automotive brands (Zang et al., 2022; Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2022), there is a notable absence of empirical studies that explicitly integrate brand trust as a moderating or mediating variable within the UTAUT2 model in the context of EV adoption. Chinese automotive brands are relatively new entrants in the Thai market, and Thai consumers may hold distinct perceptions regarding the competence and benevolence of Chinese manufacturers compared to established brands. This research fills this gap by incorporating brand trust, particularly trust in competence and trust in compassion, as additional components alongside the core factors of UTAUT2. This provides a more detailed understanding of how trust influences Thai consumers' intention to purchase electric vehicles from China.

Finally, existing empirical studies in the Thai context have tended to adopt either a purely technology-acceptance perspective or a purely marketing perspective, but have rarely integrated both within a single unified framework (Limpasirisuwan et al., 2024; Manutworakit & Choocharukul, 2022). Such fragmentation limits the explanatory potential of individual research and makes it difficult to draw holistic conclusions about the relationship between Performance Expectancy, Social Influence, Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Brand Trust evaluation. This research fills this integration gap by integrating the improved UTAUT2 model with brand trust theory, offering a more comprehensive model to understand Thai consumer behavior toward strategically significant new product segments.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 Theory

The theoretical foundation of this study is based on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2), developed by Viswanath Venkatesh and colleagues in 2012 (Venkatesh et al., 2012) which was initially proposed in 2003 to explain user acceptance of information systems in organizational contexts. While the original UTAUT model focused primarily on employee technology adoption, UTAUT2 was specifically designed for consumer contexts, making it highly appropriate for examining consumer purchase intention toward innovative technologies. There are key constructs from eight prior technology acceptance theories, including the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), and the Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers, 1962). By combining these frameworks, UTAUT2 provides a comprehensive explanation of consumer behavioral intention and use behavior. the following seven constructs from UTAUT2 are 1.) Performance Expectancy; 2.) Effort Expectancy; 3.) Social Influence; 4.) Facilitation Conditions; 5.) Hedonic Motivation; 6.) Price Value; and 7.) Habit.

To ensure parsimony and contextual suitability, this study adopts a modified version tailored to the research context. Specifically, this research focuses on:

Performance Expectancy (PE): Refers the perceived advantages of Chinese electric vehicles over traditional internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. This includes superior acceleration, advanced smart features such as AI voice commands and autonomous driving assistance, and the environmental benefit of zero emissions, which aligns with the consumer's desire for efficient and modern transportation.

Social Influence (SI): extents to which consumers perceive those important others, such as family, friends, or social media, believe they should use a particular technology. For the Thai market, social image and peer recommendations play a vital role in car purchasing decisions. As the EV trend grows in Thailand, the influence of online communities, social media reviewers, and the visibility of Chinese EVs on Thai roads creates a social pressure or subjective norm that encourages potential buyers to consider Chinese electric vehicle brands.

Hedonic Motivation (MV): is defined as the fun or pleasure derived from using a technology, which has been shown to be a more potent predictor of consumer technology acceptance than utilitarian value alone. For Chinese EVs, this factor is particularly strong. The large infotainment screens, customizable ambient lighting, and the quiet, smooth driving experience provide a sense of enjoyment and novelty that differentiates Chinese brands from traditional competitors.

Price Value (PV): refers to the consumer's decision between the perceived benefits of the technology and the financial cost of purchase. When the perceived benefits outweigh the financial costs, the price-to-value ratio is positive. This may be the most important factor for Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand. Consumers evaluate the high features and battery range offered by brands like BYD, GWM, or MG against their competitive prices, often perceiving these brands as providing higher value compared to Japanese or European alternatives.

2.2.2 Brand Trust Theory

Brand Trust is defined as the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function (Holbrook & Chaudhuri, 2001). In the automotive industry, where products involve high financial investment and long-term use, trust serves as a key mechanism for mitigating perceived risk and uncertainty. For this research, Brand Trust is categorized into

two main dimensions:

Competence trust: refers to the consumer's perception of the brand's ability and expertise to deliver a high-quality, functional, and safe product. In the context of Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand, this involves 1.) Battery Technology and Safety that Consumers' confidence in the durability and safety standards of Chinese battery technologies; 2.) Thai Consumer believe Chinese manufacturers can produce vehicles that meet international performance and safety standards; and 3.) The perception of Chinese brands as leaders in smart vehicle technology and software integration.

Benevolence trust: refers to the consumer's belief that the brand will act in their best interest and maintain integrity after the purchase. This is a crucial factor for Thai consumers when considering relatively new entrants in the market, this involves 1.) Chinese brands will maintain their presence in the Thai market and not exit, leaving customers without support; 2.) Trust in the availability of spare parts, the efficiency of service centers, and the reliability of warranty claims; and 3.) The brand's willingness to address technical issues or recalls transparently and responsibly.

2.2.3 Research hypothesis

The hypothesis will be designed to capture data on the key constructs from the UTAUT2 model, which include Performance expectancy, Social Influence, Hedonic motivation, and price value. An additional factor is brand trust.

Hypothesis1(H1). Performance Expectancy has a positive effect on Purchase Intention toward Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand. (Thananusak et al., 2021) Consumers' perceptions of the benefits and effectiveness of Chinese EVs, such as advanced features, fuel savings, and environmental friendliness.

Hypothesis2(H2). Social Influence has a positive effect on Purchase Intention toward Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand. (Y. Yang & Tan, 2019) Opinions of family, friends, and societal norms, on the decision to adopt Chinese EVs.

Hypothesis3(H3). Hedonic motivation has a positive effect on purchase intention toward Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand. (Zhou et al., 2021) To refer the enjoyment or pleasure derived from using a product, such as the satisfaction of driving a technologically advanced or stylish electric vehicle.

Hypothesis4(H4). Price value has a positive effect on purchase intention toward Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand. The perceived balance between the cost of the EV (initial price, maintenance, and charging costs) and its value in terms of benefits and quality. (Kongklaew et al., 2021)

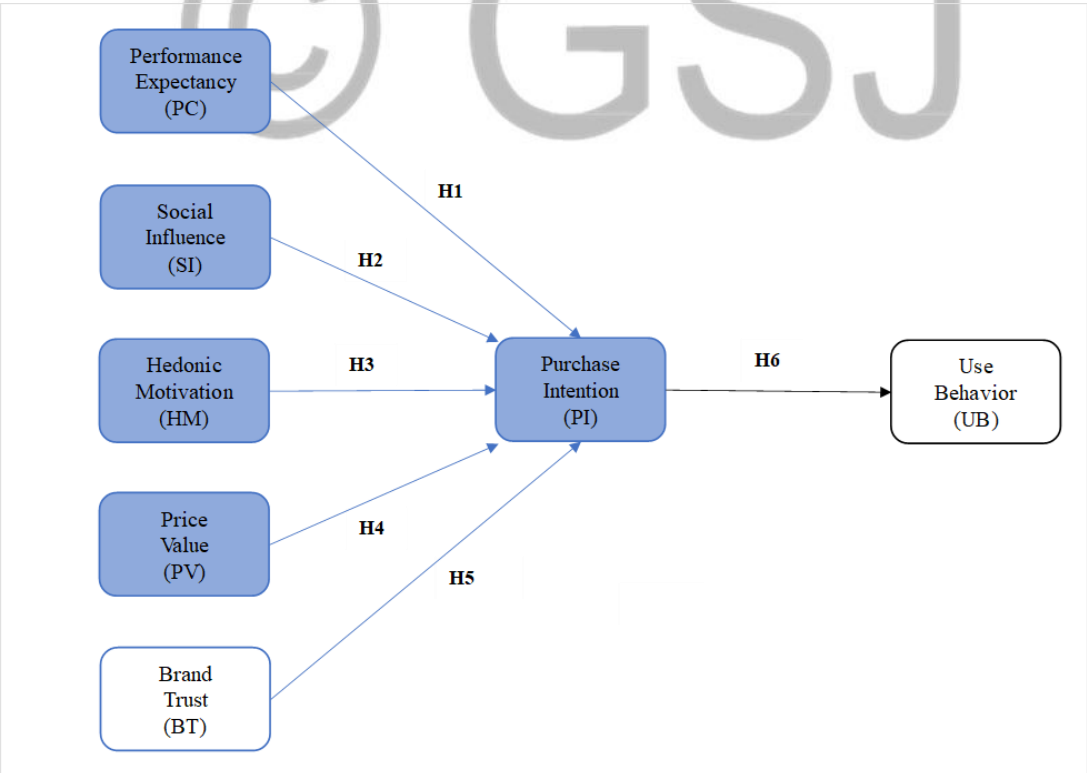

Figure 3 Consumer's purchase intention on Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand: UTAUT2 model

Hypothesis5(H5). Brand Trust has a positive effect on Purchase Intention toward Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand. (Zang et al., 2022) Trust in the Chinese EV brand will significantly impact consumers' decision to purchase a vehicle from these manufacturers.

Hypothesis(H6). Purchase intention has a positive effect toward use behavior. (Venkatesh et al., 2012) The major determinant of use behavior (UB). It is a key predictor of Use Behavior, as consumers who intend to purchase a Chinese EV are more likely to transition into use behavior.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Questionnaire Development

The questionnaires were adapted from the UTAUT2 framework (Venkatesh et al., 2012), including an additional variable (Zang et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2020), brand trust, and contextualized to reflect the Thai electric vehicle market. The study expands the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology 2 (UTAUT2) model and includes the following constructs:

Constructs
Performance Expectancy (PE) - I believe using a Chinese EV would increase my overall driving experience. - I believe using a Chinese EV would reduce my energy cost per month. - I believe that Chinese EVs are equipped with advanced technology that meets international safety and performance standards.
Social Influence (SI) - My family supports the idea of purchasing a Chinese EVs. - My friends support the idea of purchasing a Chinese EVs. - social media influences my decision to consider a Chinese EVs.
Hedonic Motivation (HM) - Using a Chinese EVs would give me sense of exciting and satisfaction. - I would feel excited about the innovative and stylish design of a Chinese EVs. - Owning Chinese EVs would make me feel proud and reflect my personal values as a consumer.
Price Value (PV) - The price of Chinese EVs is reasonable considering the quality and features. - Chinese EVs offer better value for money compared to other EV brands available in Thailand. - Even though they are more affordable, I believe that Chinese electric vehicles offer quality and standards that are no less than those of their competitors.
Brand Trust (BT) - I have confidence in the after-sales service and the availability of spare parts for Chinese electric vehicle brands in Thailand. - I feel confident in the safety and performance of Chinese EVs. - I believe that Chinese EV brands are just as reputable and trustworthy as those from Europe or Japan.
Purchase Intention (PI) - I prefer Chinese EV brands over other international brands when considering an electric vehicle purchase. - If I had a chance, I would buy a Chinese Ev as my first car or my next vehicle. - I am actively researching options for purchasing a Chinese Ev.
Use Behavior (UB) - I will buy Chinese EVs in the future. - I would recommend Chinese EVs to my family or friends who are considering purchasing an electric vehicle. - After purchasing a Chinese electric vehicle, I am confident that I will integrate it into my routine transportation needs.

Table 2 Example questionnaire for UTAUT2 model

Respondents completed a structured questionnaire in which they rated their agreement with each statement using a five-

point Likert scale, with 1 indicating "Strongly Disagree," 2 "Disagree," 3 "Neutral," 4 "Agree," and 5 "Strongly Agree." (Joshi et al., 2015)

3.2 Sample Method

Target Population: The target population of this study consisted of Thai consumers residing in Thailand who were aware of electric vehicles in general. The population spans multiple generational cohorts, including Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964), Generation X (born 1965–1979), Generation Y (born 1980–1997), and Generation Z (born 1998 onward), residing across different regions of Thailand.

Sampling Method: Convenience sampling was chosen for its practicality in online survey distribution via social media platforms and digital channels, while purposive criteria ensured that respondents possessed relevant knowledge of or interest in electric vehicles, particularly Chinese brands. Data collection was conducted using Google Forms in 30 days. The survey link was distributed through a variety of social media platforms, including Facebook groups and LINE, as well as through messaging applications widely used in Thailand.

Sample Size: The target sample will consist of at least 300 respondents, a size deemed adequate for structural equation modeling using Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) analysis, which reduces sampling error and enhances the generalizability of the findings across multiple generational groups and geographic regions of Thailand.

3.3 Statistical Analysis

PLS-SEM: Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was selected as the primary analytical approach for this study for three methodological reasons. First, PLS-SEM does not impose strict assumptions of multivariate normality on the observed data, making it particularly appropriate for social science research where survey data commonly deviate from normal distributions. Second, PLS-SEM is well-suited to models of moderate complexity involving multiple latent constructs and reflective measurement indicators, such as the UTAUT2 framework extended with brand trust employed in this study. Third, PLS-SEM offers strong predictive accuracy and is especially recommended when the primary research objective involves explaining variance in key dependent variables rather than confirming an existing theory. (Hair, Hult, et al., 2019) The software platform WarpPLS 8.0 was used to implement all analyses, which is specifically designed for variance-based SEM and offers an array of fit indices and diagnostic statistics that allow for comprehensive evaluation of both measurement and structural model quality.

Measurement Model Assessment: Primarily, the measurement model was assessed to confirm the reliability and validity of all latent variables. Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha, with acceptable thresholds set at 0.70 and above. (Nunnally, 1978) Convergent validity was examined through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct, with a minimum acceptable value of 0.50, indicating that a construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) Discriminant validity was established by verifying that each construct was empirically distinct from all others, assessed through the heterotrait-monotrait ratio and related criteria reported by WarpPLS 8.0. All constructs were required to meet these established thresholds before proceeding to structural model evaluation, ensuring that the measurement instruments were sufficiently reliable and valid to support meaningful interpretation of the hypothesized relationships.

Structural Model Assessment: The second stage confirmation of the measurement model, the structural model, was evaluated to test the six research hypotheses. Overall model fit was assessed using the Tenenhaus Goodness of Fit (GoF) index, with values of 0.10, 0.25, and 0.36 representing small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively. (Tenenhaus et al., 2005) Additional fit diagnostics reported by WarpPLS 8.0, including the Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-squared (ARS), Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS), Simpson's Paradox Ratio (SPR), R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR), Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR), and Non-linear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR), were also examined against their respective acceptable thresholds. The explanatory power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2) for each endogenous variable. R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 were interpreted as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. Hypothesis testing was conducted by examining the standardized path coefficients (β) and associated p-values for each proposed structural relationship. A significance threshold of $p < 0.05$ was applied, with $p < 0.001$ considered indicative of a strong and highly significant relationship. Hypotheses for which the path coefficient met the significance threshold were classified as supported, while those that did not were rejected.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were first used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the 341 respondents. The majority of respondents were female (56%) and belonged to Generation Z (born in 1998 onward), accounting for 64.2% of the sample. Most participants held at least a bachelor's degree (73.3%), and a significant proportion were employed in private companies (39%). In terms of geographic distribution, the Bangkok Metropolitan Region accounted for the largest proportion of respondents (64.2%), consistent with the region's higher concentration of EV-related infrastructure and consumer awareness.

Category		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	150	44.0
	Female	191	56.0
Generation	Gen Z	219	64.2
	Gen Y	92	27.0
	Gen X	27	7.9
	Baby boomer	3	0.9
Education	Under Bachelor's degree	25	7.3
	Bachelor's degree	250	73.3
	Master's degree	60	17.6
	Doctor's degree	6	1.8
Occupation	Student	118	34.6
	Government officer	19	5.6
	Private company employees	133	39.0
	Business owners	39	11.4
	Freelance	26	7.6
	others	6	1.8
Income	Less than 15,000 THB	104	30.5
	15,001 – 25,000 THB	73	21.4
	25,001 – 35,000 THB	59	17.3
	35,001 – 45,000THB	31	9.1
	9001-11000 45,001 – 55,000 THB	20	5.9
	More than 55,001 THB	54	15.8
Accommodation province	Bangkok Metropolitan Region	219	64.2
	Central Region	27	7.9
	Northern Region	43	12.6
	Southern Region	18	5.3
	Eastern Region	34	10.0

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of 341 online survey respondents

In conclusion, the demographic profile of the sample is dominated by young, highly educated, and urban respondents, particularly Generation Z residing in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region. This data aligns with the characteristics of early EV adopters and digitally engaged survey participants in Thailand, and is considered appropriate for examining purchase intention toward Chinese electric vehicles in the Thai market.

Constructs	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D.
Performance Expectancy	1.00	5.00	3.52	1.03
Social Influence	1.00	5.00	3.12	1.16
Hedonic Motivation	1.00	5.00	3.47	1.08
Price Value	1.00	5.00	3.70	1.01
Brand Trust	1.00	5.00	3.14	1.01
Purchase Intention	1.00	5.00	3.10	1.19
Use Behavior	1.00	5.00	2.97	1.23

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of the UTAUT constructs

For the Table 4, presents the descriptive statistics for UTAUT2 constructs, with mean values ranging from 2.97 to 3.70 and standard deviations between 1.01 and 1.23, reflecting moderate to moderately high agreement and acceptable variability among respondents. Price Value recorded the highest mean score (M = 3.70, SD = 1.01), indicating that Thai consumers perceive Chinese electric vehicles as offering reasonable value relative to cost, followed by Performance Expectancy (M = 3.52, SD = 1.03) and Hedonic Motivation (M = 3.47, SD = 1.08), which reflect positive functional and emotional evaluations. In contrast, Use Behavior yielded the lowest mean score (M = 2.97, SD = 1.23), suggesting that despite favorable perceptions and intentions, actual behavioral commitment to purchasing and using Chinese EVs remains limited, consistent with Thailand's current early-stage EV adoption landscape, where consumer interest is growing, but large-scale adoption is still developing.

4.2 Measurement Model Assessment

4.2.1 Realibility Test

Constructs	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	Discriminant Validity
PE	0.848	0.729	0.651	2.830
SI	0.827	0.684	0.616	2.505
HM	0.913	0.857	0.779	3.344
PV	0.806	0.637	0.583	1.850
BT	0.939	0.902	0.837	2.842
PI	0.922	0.872	0.797	3.433
UB	0.887	0.809	0.725	3.054
PE, Performance Expectancy; SI, Social Influence; HM, Hedonic Motivation; PV, Price Value, BT, Brand Trust; PI, Price Value; UB, Use Behavior; AVE, Average Variance Extract				

Table 5 Reliability Test

The results of the reliability and validity tests are presented in Table 5. Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs ranged from 0.806 to 0.939, exceeding the threshold of 0.70 recommended, which indicates a good level of internal consistency across constructs. (Hair, Hult, et al., 2019) Similarly, Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.637 to 0.902, with most constructs surpassing 0.70, demonstrating acceptable to excellent reliability across constructs near Nunnally's suggested (Nunnally, 1978) Although Social Influence (SI) yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.684, which is marginally below 0.70, this is considered acceptable given that its CR value of 0.827 comfortably exceeds the recommended threshold. (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) Convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All constructs demonstrated AVE values above the minimum threshold of 0.50, ranging from 0.583 to 0.837, confirming that each construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. Discriminant validity was also established, with all constructs recording values greater than 1.00, indicating that each construct is empirically distinct from the others. (Hair, Risher, et al., 2019) The measurement model demonstrates good reliability and validity, indicating that all constructs in the UTAUT framework are statistically reliable for further analysis.

4.2.2 Model Test

The overall model fit and quality indices were examined using WarpPLS 8.0 (Kock, 2024), and the results strongly indicate that the structural model is both statistically robust and theoretically sound. As presented in Table 6. The Average Path Coefficient (APC) was 0.277 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the path relationships within the model were statistically significant. The Average R-squared (ARS) and Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS) were 0.606 and 0.602, respectively ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that the model explains approximately 60% of the variance in the dependent variables, which is considered a high level of explanatory power. The Tenenhaus Goodness of Fit (GoF) index was 0.657, which exceeds the threshold for a large effect size (≥ 0.36), indicating that the model demonstrates a high level of overall fit with the data. Furthermore, Simpson's Paradox Ratio (SPR), R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR), Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR), and Non-linear Bivariate Causality Direction Ratio (NLBCDR) all yielded a value of 1.000, meeting or exceeding their respective acceptable thresholds of 0.7 and ideal values of 1.0.

Measure	Value	P-Values
Average path coefficient (APC)	0.277	P < 0.001
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.606	P < 0.001
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)	0.602	P < 0.001
Average block VIF (AVIF)	2.457	acceptable if ≤ 5, ideally ≤ 3.3
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	2.837	acceptable if ≤ 5, ideally ≤ 3.3
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	0.657	small ≥ 0.1, medium ≥0.25, large ≥ 0.36
Simpson's paradox ratio (SPR)	1.000	acceptable if ≥ 0.7, ideally = 1
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	1.000	acceptable if ≥0.9, ideally = 1
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	1.000	acceptable if ≥ 0.7
Non-linear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	1.000	acceptable if ≥ 0.7

Table 6 Model fit and quality indices

Therefore, the proposed research model is statistically sound, free from common bias and issues and appropriate for examining the factors influencing Thai consumers' purchase intention toward Chinese electric vehicles.

4.3 Strctural Medel Assessment

4.3.1 Coefficient of Determination

	R^2	R^2 Adjusted
PI	0.582	0.576
UB	0.630	0.629

PI, Purchase intention; UB, Use Behavior

Table 7 Coefficient of determination R-Squared

Table 7 presents the coefficient of determination (R^2) for the endogenous latent variables. The R^2 value for Purchase Intention (PI) was 0.582, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.576, indicating that the exogenous variables explain approximately 58.2% of the variance in Thai consumer's purchase intention toward Chinese electric vehicles. The R^2 value for Use Behavior (UB) was 0.630, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.629, indicating that the model explains approximately 63.0% of the variance in Use Behavior. Furthermore, R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. Therefore, both PI (R^2 = 0.582) and UB (R^2 = 0.630) demonstrate moderate to substantial explanatory power. (Hair, Risher, et al., 2019) This represents a strong explanatory capability, suggesting that the model effectively predicts the behavioral intention leading to actual use.

4.3.2 Hypothesis Testing

This study explores consumers' purchase intention on Chinese electric vehicles in Thailand based on the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology model. The model includes key constructs such as Performance Expectancy (PE), Social Influence (SI), Hedonic Motivation (HM), and Price Value (PV), including Brand Trust (BT), aiming to understand their effects on Purchase Intention (PI) and Use Behavior (UB). A total of six hypotheses were formulated and tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via WarpPLS 8.0. The path coefficients, p-values, and support status for each hypothesis are summarized in Table 8 and Figure 4 below,

Hypothesis	Path	ß	P-Value	Supported
H1	PE→PI	0.119	0.013	No
H2	SI→PI	0.125	0.010	No
H3	HM→PI	0.265	**	Yes
H4	PV→PI	0.015	0.391	No
H5	BT→PI	0.344	**	Yes
H6	PI→UB	0.794	**	Yes

**P < 0.001

Table 8 Path result and research model

Three hypotheses were not supported by the structural model results. In this study, the significance threshold was set at $p < 0.01$, a more stringent criterion than the conventional $p < 0.05$, to reduce the risk of Type I error given the exploratory nature of the model. Performance Expectancy (H1), yielding path coefficients of $\beta = 0.119$ ($p = 0.013$), This suggests that Thai consumers in the sampled population do not primarily evaluate Chinese EVs on the basis of expected functional performance improvements in their daily activities. One plausible explanation is that the predominance of Generation Z respondents, which is a cohort that tends to prioritize experiential and identity-driven values over purely utilitarian ones, may reduce the salience of performance-based considerations in the purchase decision process. Social Influence (H2) similarly failed to reach significance, recording a path coefficient of $\beta = 0.125$ ($p = 0.010$), which suggests that Thai consumers tend to rely more on personal experience and individual judgment rather than external opinions. This implies that social influence alone may not be sufficient to shape consumers' actual purchase intentions for high-involvement products such as automobiles. Finally, Price Value (H4) showed no meaningful relationship with Purchase Intention, yielding the lowest path coefficient in the model at $\beta = 0.015$ ($p = 0.391$). This result is notable given that price sensitivity is often cited as a key barrier to EV adoption. However, Chinese EV brands are generally positioned at competitive price points in the Thai market relative to Japanese and European alternatives, which may diminish the role of price-value perceptions as a differentiating factor in consumers' decision-making. None of these paths met the required significance threshold of $p < 0.01$, leading to the rejection of H1, H2, and H4.

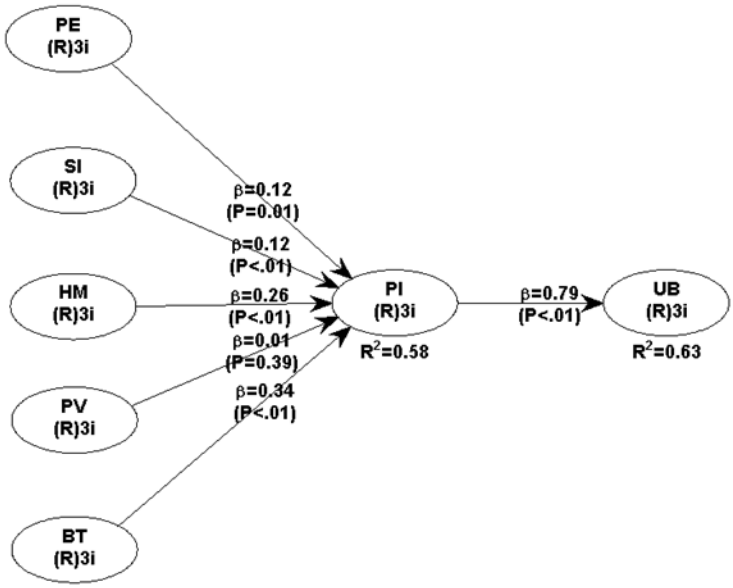

Figure 4 The result of the UTAUT2 model. PE, Performance Expectatancy; SI, Social Inflence; HM, Hedonic Motivation; PV, Price Value; BT, Brand Trust; UB, Use Behavior

On the other hand, Hedonic Motivation (H3) was confirmed as a significant positive predictor of Purchase Intention, with a path coefficient of β = 0.265 (p < 0.001). This result indicates that the enjoyment, excitement, and aesthetic appeal associated with Chinese EVs meaningfully shape consumers' intentions to purchase. The modern design language, high technology, and the inherently smooth and dynamic driving experience offered by electric powertrains all appear to contribute to this hedonic dimension. Also, Brand Trust (H5) recorded a path coefficient of β = 0.344 (p < 0.001). This result underscores the critical importance of consumer confidence in Chinese EV brands, particularly with respect to perceived reliability, safety standards, and after-sales service quality. Considering that brands such as BYD, Neta, and GWM are relatively recent entrants to the Thai automotive market, consumers appear to engage in careful, credible evaluation before committing to a purchase. The prominence of Brand Trust reflects the inherent uncertainty that often accompanies the adoption of products from non-traditional automotive origins, and suggests that transparent brand communication and demonstrable service quality are powerful levers for driving purchase intention. Furthermore, Purchase Intention demonstrated a substantial and highly significant positive effect on Use Behavior (H6), yielding a path coefficient of β = 0.794 (p < 0.001), which is the highest in the entire model. This robust relationship affirms the foundational premise of UTAUT2, which posits that behavioral intention serves as the most proximate determinant of actual usage behavior. The magnitude of this coefficient suggests that Thai consumers who express a clear intention to purchase Chinese EVs are highly likely to follow through with actual adoption, reinforcing the construct validity and practical relevance of the model in this context. Thus, H3, H5 and H6 are supported.

Largely, three out of six hypotheses were supported. This aligns with the theoretical foundation of UTAUT2, which posits that behavioral intention directly drives user adoption behavior. Hedonic Motivation and Brand Trust were found to be significant predictors of Purchase Intention, while Purchase Intention strongly predicted Use Behavior. Performance Expectancy and Social Influence showed marginal significance but did not meet the stringent threshold, and Price Value showed no significant effect on Purchase Intention.

5. DISCUSSION

The finding that Hedonic Motivation (H3: β = 0.265, p < 0.001) significantly consistent with UTAUT2 theory, as a statistically significant and practically meaningful predictor of Purchase Intention, consistent with the broader UTAUT2 literature and with prior studies conducted in Asian EV markets. The confirmation of this hypothesis reinforces the view that the purchase of an electric vehicle, particularly one from a Chinese brand associated with innovative design and advanced technology, carries significant experiential and symbolic value for Thai consumers. The smooth acceleration, quiet cabin, advanced infotainment systems, and distinctive design aesthetics of models such as the BYD Dolphin, NIO ES8, and ChangAn Deepal appear to generate genuine hedonic value that translates into purchase intention. In line with the paper, which identified the pleasurable and futuristic driving experience of EVs as a key driver of adoption consideration among Thai consumers (Manutworakit & Choocharukul, 2022). Also, the hedonic, rather than utilitarian, motivations that drive purchase intention among young Thai consumers align with theoretical perspectives on Generation Z consumption behavior, which emphasize emotional resonance, self-expression, and experience-oriented evaluation over rational cost-benefit calculus (Branca et al., 2025; Theocharis et al., 2025). This insight encourages future scholars to reconsider the dominant utilitarian framing of EV adoption models and to place greater theoretical emphasis on hedonic pathways to intention formation. And similar across multiple Asian market studies, among Chinese electric taxi drivers in Shenzhen and Guangzhou. (Zhou et al., 2021) Chinese consumers in Guangdong, Shanghai, and Shandong provinces demonstrate a stronger orientation toward the experiential and enjoyment dimensions of EV ownership than toward purely functional or economic considerations (Fu, 2024).

Brand Trust (H5: β = 0.344, p < 0.001) emerged as the strongest predictor of Purchase Intention in the model. particularly in contexts involving unfamiliar or recently internationalized brands (Zang et al., 2022). Compared to Japanese brands in Thailand, such as Toyota, Honda, and Isuzu, have maintained dominant market positions for decades, building deep reservoirs of consumer trust through consistent quality, extensive service networks, and long-standing market presence in the Thai market. Or German luxury brands such as BMW and Mercedes-Benz similarly enjoy strong prestige-based trust associations. Chinese EV manufacturers, as relative newcomers to the Thai market, must therefore overcome a significant trust deficit to compete effectively for consumer consideration and purchase commitment (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2022). Furthermore, Generation Z consumers have shown that younger Thai consumers, despite their openness to innovation and their comfort with Chinese technology products in other categories such as smartphones and consumer electronics, consistent with evidence that they are inherently more risk-averse than preceding generational cohorts (Dobrowolski et al., 2022) and exercise substantial caution when evaluating a high-value, safety-critical product such as an electric vehicle. (Theocharis et al., 2025) Their concerns about occupant safety, long-term reliability, battery degradation, and service accessibility carry substantial weight. Also, brand trust significantly enhances consumers' perceived benefits of EVs and their purchase intentions in the Chinese domestic market (Zang et al., 2022), and trust in EV manufacturers directly and positively influences purchase attitudes and intentions (C. Yang et al., 2020).

Theoretically, UTAUT2 predicts that both constructs should be meaningful predictors of behavioral intention. The weaker-

than-expected role of Performance Expectancy may be explained by the nature of the study's sample, which was predominantly composed of Generation Z consumers (64.2%) who tend to prioritize experiential and identity-oriented values over rational, utilitarian assessments. This suggests that while UTAUT2's predictions hold at the level of direction (positive effects), the relative weight of each construct is highly context-dependent and may shift significantly across demographic profiles and cultural settings. The limited influence of Social Influence may reflect the high-involvement nature of automobile purchasing, in which consumers are less susceptible to peer and normative pressure and instead rely on personal evaluation and direct product experience.

Most notably, Price Value (H4: $\beta = 0.015$, $p = 0.391$) showed no statistically significant relationship with Purchase Intention, which diverges from the theoretical expectation of UTAUT2 that price value perceptions positively influence behavioral intention. This is theoretically surprising, particularly given Thailand's status as a developing economy where price sensitivity is conventionally expected to be high. However, this deviation from theoretical prediction can be interpreted in light of the specific market positioning of Chinese EVs in Thailand, where Chinese brands such as BYD, MG, and Neta already occupy competitive price points substantially below Western and European alternatives. As a result, price advantage may be a baseline expectation rather than a differentiating factor, effectively neutralizing its explanatory power within the model. Additionally, the predominance of young, university-educated respondents with moderate to high income levels in the sample may have reduced price sensitivity relative to broader population segments.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined the factors influencing Thai consumers' purchase intention toward Chinese electric vehicles through the lens of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2), extended with Brand Trust as an additional construct. Using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via WarpPLS 8.0, six hypotheses were tested based on survey data collected from 341 respondents across Thailand. The measurement model demonstrated strong reliability and validity, with Composite Reliability values ranging from 0.806 to 0.939 and Average Variance Extracted values exceeding 0.50 for all constructs. The structural model yielded a Tenenhaus GoF of 0.657, indicating a high level of overall model fit, and explained 58.2% of the variance in Purchase Intention and 63.0% in Use Behavior.

The six hypotheses tested, three were supported and three were rejected at the $p < 0.01$ significance threshold. Hedonic Motivation ($\beta = 0.265$, $p < 0.001$) and Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.344$, $p < 0.001$) were confirmed as significant positive predictors of Purchase Intention, with Brand Trust emerging as the strongest antecedent among all constructs. Purchase Intention, in turn, demonstrated a highly significant and substantial positive effect on Use Behavior (H6: $\beta = 0.794$, $p < 0.001$), the highest path coefficient in the model. Conversely, Performance Expectancy ($\beta = 0.119$, $p = 0.013$), Social Influence ($\beta = 0.125$, $p = 0.010$), and Price Value ($\beta = 0.015$, $p = 0.391$) did not reach the required significance threshold and were therefore not supported.

These findings reflect the distinctive consumption profile of the study's sample, which was predominantly composed of Generation Z respondents (64.2%), young urban professionals, and university-educated individuals residing in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region. For this cohort, the decision to adopt a Chinese EV is shaped less by utilitarian performance assessments or external social pressures than by emotional engagement with the product and confidence in the brand. The results affirm that, in the context of Thailand's early-stage EV market, the hedonic and trust dimensions of consumer evaluation are the most powerful drivers of purchase intention, while price and functional utility play a comparatively subordinate role. Furthermore, they also perceive Chinese electric vehicles as reasonably priced compared to other foreign brands, and tend to make independent purchase decisions after an actual test drive rather than being influenced by recommendations from social conformity. These results carry significant implications for how Chinese EV manufacturers and Thai policymakers approach the challenge of accelerating electric vehicle adoption in the country.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Firstly, future research should strive to use the cross-sectional design used in this study, which allows for efficient data collection across a broad sample. It is inherently limited in its ability to capture the dynamic nature of consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions over time. Moreover, considering adopting a longitudinal design to track how purchase intentions evolve as Chinese EV brands gain greater market presence, consumer familiarity deepens, and the broader Thai EV ecosystem matures.

Second, the sample in this study was dominated by Generation Z respondents (64.2%) and urban residents of the Bangkok Metropolitan Region (64.2%), which, while appropriate for exploring digital-native consumer behavior, limits the generalizability of the findings to older generations and consumers in rural or regional areas of Thailand. Future studies should deliberately stratify sampling across generational cohorts and geographic regions to enable multi-group analysis and produce findings that are more representative of the full spectrum of Thai consumer demographics. Comparative analyses between Generation Z and Generation Y or Generation X consumers may yield particularly valuable insights, given the generational differences in technology orientation, brand sensitivity, and financial decision-making (Dobrowolski et al., 2022).

Finally, the methodology of this study relied exclusively on self-reported survey data, which introduces the possibility of

common method bias and social desirability effects. In-depth interviews or focus groups with Thai consumers who have either purchased or seriously considered purchasing a Chinese EV would provide rich contextual data on the specific trust formation processes, the nature of hedonic motivations, and the decision-making narratives that consumers construct around Chinese EV adoption.

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